

## 4-H Agriculture Program: Hands-On Youth Learning Experiences

Washington State University (WSU) Extension has designed and implemented an interactive Agriculture program for students wanting to learn about agriculture and related sciences. This program offers opportunities to learn and discover agriculture as a career with many options. Through hands-on experiments youth learn different aspects of agriculture such as soil texture by feel, pH concepts, soil preparation, and seed collection. They also learn that agriculture is everywhere and many crops are used in food production. This program also provides “Agriculture in the Classroom” subjects, which are designed for school teachers with little or no agriculture background.



Youth from Prescott, Walla Walla Learning to make soil texture by feel.

*Photo S. Morales*

### Program Goals:

- Increase the number of students with knowledge in agriculture.
- Developing life skills
- Facilitating Agriculture in classroom activities for science teachers
- Promoting good relations between WSU Extension and the surrounding area.

In five years this program has provided workshops and has promoted “Agriculture in the Classroom” to 288 teachers, volunteers and youth at local conferences, summer programs, and three Super Saturdays in King County. Additional project goals include developing of life skills, facilitating Agriculture in the Classroom activities for science teachers, and promoting good relations between WSU Extension and the surrounding area.

A partnership with “Washington Agriculture in the Classroom” (WAIC) has been developed that has promoted the Ag@School Magazine. Recent information showed that about 15% of teachers in King County have reported receiving this magazine. The agriculture program has been included in the King County “Program for Educators,” which is distributed to every school in King County. Youth have a heightened awareness of WSU educational activities, and of agriculture in the state of Washington.

23 youth at El Centro in Seattle have learned that agriculture is a career with many choices, as well as how to become effective leaders and to be better communicators. They demonstrated their communication and leadership skills through active participation at the “Harvest Celebration” in Seattle.



Youth from El Centro attending the Harvest Celebration in Seattle.

*Photo S. Morales*



Student- Intern explaining plant Research in WSU Greenhouse-Pullman.

*Photo J. Patterson*



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In 2003, 24 youth from White Center developed field and academic skills through hands-on activities such as gardening and seed collections. The program ended with presentations and posters that were displayed at the 2003 Seattle Fair.



Youth making a presentation at White Center Summer Camp.

*Photo S. Morales*

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The process of developing and implementing summer programs provided an opportunity to demonstrate WSU Extension's capacity for building successful partnerships with youth-serving organizations, which addresses the needs of diverse audiences.

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Comments about this program:

- Thank you for helping me to improve my agriculture knowledge, comprehension, and personal life skills. I thought agriculture was just planting and harvesting!
- The Agriculture Youth program had taught the students that the exilicating journey from the Latino Summer Camp was mesmerizing. The 2003 youth participants learned the history of crops, the roots of our ancestors
- At The Farm Labor Housing in a Walla you touched 600 lives in a very positive way. The seeds you planted are growing well, and others are continuing what you started.
- It was valuable to see young people working on agriculture projects. Keep on agriculture!
- I realized the importance to share my skills and teaching the richest of agricultural diversity in the world.

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*For more information about the 4-H Agriculture  
In The Classroom program call 206-205-3133*



Volunteer participating in the 2003 Summer Camp in White Center

*Photo S. Morales*

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